

I. COUNTY DESCRIPTION

A. County Profile

Grainger County was established in 1796 from parts of Knox and Hawkins Counties. The county was named in honor of Mary Grainger wife of William Blount, Governor of the Territory of the United States, “South of the River Ohio”, and the founder of the City of Knoxville. She was the official first lady of the Southwest Territory from 1791 to 1796.

The county seat of Grainger County is Rutledge. Rutledge named in honor of General George Rutledge was incorporated in 1927.

Without a doubt, Grainger County is famous for their Grainger County tomatoes. Due to the geology (rainfall, soil and temperature), the tomatoes are exceptional. The tomato crops bring in ~7-8 million annually, tobacco bringing in ~6-7 million to the county with 50-75 tomato farmers versus 1000 tobacco farmers. To promote the tomato industry Grainger County holds an annual Tomato Festival, which draws approximately 14,000, to assist the farmers. The event includes arts & crafts, a beauty pageant, a softball tournament, entertainment and street dancing.

Grainger County Community Profile

Location

Region: East Tennessee

Square Miles: 310

Distance from Knoxville: 35 miles

Population (1998 est.)

Total: 19,462

Cities/Towns/Communities

Rutledge

Blaine

Bean Station

Thorn Hill

Washburn

Education

Joppa Elementary

Bean Station Elementary

Rutledge Elementary

Washburn K-12 School

Rutledge Middle School

Rutledge High School

Grainger County Adult High School

Natural Resources

Minerals: Marble, Manganese & Limestone

Timber: Red Oak & Hickory

Crops: Tobacco & Tomatoes

Climate

Annual Average Temperature: 56°

Annual Average Precipitation: 59”

Elevation: 1,350’ above sea level

Grainger County Selected Economic Indicators

Annual Labor Force Estimates (1998)

Annual Total Labor Force: 9,886

Number Employed 9,397

Number Unemployed: 489

⁺Unemployment Rate %: 5.0

⁺Annual unemployment rate dropped in 1998

Tax Structure

County Property Tax Rate per \$100 value: \$2.77

*Per Capita Income (1996 est.): \$14,455